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Identical letters dated 28 October 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I am writing to you with respect to the letter of Ibrahim Al-Jaafari, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, dated 14 October 2016 (S/2016/870).

My Government rejects all accusations levelled against Turkey in the letter, which was regretfully circulated on the same date a senior Turkish delegation was visiting Baghdad upon the invitation of Mr. Al-Jaafari, for the third round of bilateral consultations between Turkey and Iraq to reach a common understanding on bilateral issues.

Turkey respects the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq and has spared no effort to uphold these principles both on the ground and in international forums.

Since the rise of DEASH terror in Iraq, Turkey has stood by the Iraqi people and supported the Iraqi Government and acted with the international community to fight against this threat.

As a core member of the Coalition, Turkey is determined to further increase its support to the efforts to defeat DEASH.

DEASH poses a far more direct threat against the national security of Turkey than it does to the safety of most of the Coalition partners. Turkey has a common border of 1,295 km with Syria and Iraq where DEASH still controls large swaths of territory and continues to attack Turkey and its citizens.

The Iraqi Government, which claims that it has been fighting DEASH on behalf of the international community, carries out this struggle with the support of the international community. Therefore, it is in the best interest of all concerned if Iraq seeks as much support as it can assure in this major effort.

On the other side, the terrorist organization PKK, operating in both Syria and Iraq for decades, under different forms and acronyms, has been posing a serious threat to the national security of Turkey. Successive Iraqi Governments' inability and unwillingness to remove such a direct threat to their neighbour from their territory has led to the expansion of this threat to the Nineveh and Kirkuk governorates of Iraq.

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Whereas Turkey remains committed to resolving any outstanding disagreement through bilateral channels, in light of the above-mentioned facts and the legitimate purpose of defending its territory and citizens against these threats emanating from the Iraqi soil, it is also entitled to invoke the principles and provisions of international law to take relevant measures as necessary.

I would be grateful if you could circulate the present letter to the members of the Security Council as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Feridun H. **Sinirlioğlu**
Permanent Representative